

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of configuring a scan in an imaging device, the method comprising the steps of:
 - beginning a data acquisition step for a first scan;
 - during the data acquisition step for the first scan, completing a data entry step relating to a second scan;
 - completing the data acquisition step for the first scan; and
 - beginning a data acquisition step for the second scan.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the data entry step comprises entering all data necessary for the imaging device to begin the second scan.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of beginning the data acquisition step for the second scan comprises:
 - commanding the imaging device to determine a next patient to be scanned;
 - verifying the identity of the patient arriving at the scanner; and
 - commanding the imaging device to begin the second scan.
4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of specifying at least one criterion for determining a next patient to be scanned.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the data entry step comprises:
 - downloading information from a central database; and
 - entering data locally at a site where the scan takes place.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of entering data locally comprises entering radioactive tracer information.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of entering data locally comprises entering scan protocol data.

8. An imaging system comprising:
a detector which detects radiation during a data acquisition step of a scan;
at least one processor which controls configuration and execution of the scan;
and
at least one memory which stores at least one computer program for executing the scan and data for configuration of the scan;
wherein the processor is programmed to conduct the data acquisition step for a first scan, and during the data acquisition step for the first scan, conduct a data entry step for a second scan.
9. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises a medical imaging device.
10. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises a positron emission tomography scanner.
11. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises a single photon emission computed tomography scanner.
12. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises an X-ray imager.
13. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises a computed tomography scanner.
14. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the system comprises a magnetic resonance imaging scanner.
15. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the at least one processor is programmed to allow an operator to specify at least one criterion for determining a next patient to be scanned.

16. The imaging system of claim 8, wherein the processor is programmed to:
download information from a central database; and
receive data entered at a site where the scan takes place.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the data entered at the site where the
scan takes place comprises radioactive tracer information.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the data entered at the site where the
scan takes place comprises scan protocol data.

19. A method for configuring an imaging device comprising the steps of:
specifying at least one criterion for determining a next patient to be scanned
from a plurality of scheduled patients;
querying a database with the at least one criterion; and
receiving an identification of the next patient to be scanned based on the at
least one criterion.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a
tracer injection time.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a
patient arrival time.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a
patient registration time.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a
scheduled exam time.

24. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one criterion determines a scanning order for a plurality of scheduled patients, and the method further comprises the step of receiving a scanning order for the plurality of scheduled patients based on the at least one criterion.

25. The method of claim 19, further comprising the steps of:
conducting a data acquisition step for a first scan;
during the data acquisition step for the first scan, conducting a data entry step relating to a second scan.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the data entry step comprises:
downloading information from a central database; and
entering data locally at a site where the scan takes place.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of entering data locally comprises entering radioactive tracer information.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of entering data locally comprises entering data relating to a scan protocol.

29. The method of claim 25,
wherein the data entry step for the second scan is completed prior to completion of the data acquisition step of the first scan; and
wherein the step of querying the database is executed by the operator with one action; and
wherein the method further comprises the step of commanding the imaging device to begin the second scan with a single action.

30. An imaging system comprising:
a detector which detects radiation during a data acquisition step of a scan;

at least one processor which controls configuration and execution of the scan;
and

at least one memory which stores at least one computer program for executing the scan and data for configuration of the scan;

wherein the processor is programmed to allow an operator to specify at least one criterion for determining a next patient to be scanned from a plurality of scheduled patients, query a patient database with the at least one criterion, and receive an identification of the next patient to be scanned based on the at least one criterion.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is programmed to generate a scanning order for the plurality of scheduled patients based on the at least one criterion.

32. The imaging system of claim 30, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a tracer injection time.

33. The imaging system of claim 30, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a patient arrival time.

34. The imaging system of claim 30, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a patient registration time.

35. The imaging system of claim 30, wherein the at least one criterion comprises a scheduled exam time.